



The News

WOODBIDGE, N. J., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1974

State to probe dumping of lead

By ROBERT WINDREM
News Tribune Staff Writer

MADISON TOWNSHIP — The state Department of Environmental Protection has agreed to send a field representative to the Laurence Harbor beachfront to investigate the dumping of lead slag along the water line.

George R. Koehler, chairman of the township's Environmental Commission, said at last night's township council meeting that the department's Division of Waste Management has promised to send a representative to investigate the practice of trucking lead slag from Perth Amboy to Laurence Harbor, where it is dumped.

Koehler said the slag, large mound-shaped blocks of lead residue, has been dumped indiscriminately along the water line, making it unusable for recreation. To substantiate his story, Koehler said he has sent photographs of the dumping to A. W. Price, the division chief.

He said the photographs were taken Sept. 16, and an inspection of the area Sunday showed that more slag had been dumped on the same section of the beachfront, which is privately-owned. It lies just south of the township's public beach in Laurence Harbor.

"This slag, probably from the lead smelting operation of National Lead in Perth Amboy, would also contain other heavy materials and metal sulphates

associated with the raw material," Koehler said, adding that the metals and soluble salts pose an additional threat to increasing pollution in the bay.

"The life expectancy of a fish in lead-polluted waters is 18 to 24 hours," Koehler said, "A mucus forms on the gills of the fish and the fish suffocate. This is particularly bad in light of the fact that

the bay is cleansing itself, as evidenced by the fact that people are starting to catch fish off Perth Amboy."

Koehler added that environmental effects aside, the township would be spending wasted money on Green Acres applications if the practice is allowed to continue and the present damage allowed to remain.

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He added that the commission, which
meets tonight, intends to send a letter on
the matter to U.S. Attorney Herbert J.
Stern, based on the fact that the bay is an
interstate waterway and under the
jurisdiction of the Refuse Act of 1899.

Stern used the Refuse Act to halt the
sludge-flushing practices of more than 20
Shore municipalities earlier this year.